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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: SECRETARY'S OP-ED, LEBANESE DEPLOYMENT,
UNSCR 1701

11. SUMMARY: Arabic- and English-languages dailies carry Secretary Rice's op-ed, "A Path to Lasting Peace." The Arabic-language state-owned daily says Lebanese unity is "essential." A private Arabic daily, decrying Israeli "terrorism," calls for a strong Lebanese army, navy, and air force. END SUMMARY.

COVERAGE

12. Secretary Rice's August 16, "A Path to Lasting Peace," has received wide play. It first appeared August 17 in the English, privately owned "Times of Oman" (circulation 25,000); on August 18, Arabic-language, private daily "Al-Watan" (circulation 42,000) carried a translation. State-owned Arabic daily "Oman" followed suit on August 21. The aftermath of the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict continued to dominate headlines this week.

BLOCK QUOTES: THE NECESSITY OF LEBANESE UNITY

13. On August 17, government-owned Arabic daily "Oman" (circulation 38,000) asked, "Will the Lebanese Army Maintain Stability?":

"The success of the Lebanese army's deployment in the south will determine the effectiveness of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 as Israel's withdrawal and reconstruction efforts in southern Lebanon commence. The various Lebanese factions should realize the necessity of unity, and for the sake of Lebanon's present and future must thwart any attempts to divide them."

LEBANON'S ARMY MORE LIKE A "POLICE FORCE"

14. "Al-Watan" (privately owned daily, circulation 42,000) highlighted the importance of bolstering Lebanon's armed forces in an August 18 editorial, "Lebanon's Army at the Border...What Comes Next?"

"Given the Lebanese army's meager amount of arms, it is more like a police force, one incapable of resisting an Israeli incursion. Lebanon's reconstruction must begin with creating a strong army and air defenses to prevent Israel's constant violations of Lebanese air space. A strong navy is also necessary to protect Lebanese territory. This is the only thing that will make Israeli

politicians think twice before planning a new aggression."

ISRAELI "TERRORISM" AND UNSCR 1701

15. "Al-Watan" commented on Israel's alleged violations of the ceasefire on August 21, asking, "How Long Will Israeli Terrorism Continue?":

"On the Lebanese front an Israeli official was quoted as saying that Israel will not cease its military operations, to ensure that no Syrian arms reach Hezbollah. There were also assurances from an Israeli official that a new round of operations is in the works. Such renewed military action would make UN Security Council Resolution 1701 nothing but a piece of paper fluttering on the winds of Israeli ambition and thirst for aggression. On the Palestinian front, the picture is even gloomier. Israeli state terrorism continues unabated against Palestinian civilians, including democratically elected ministers. The continued Israeli terrorism shows that Israel always starts aggression, defying all UN Security Council resolutions that do not match its interests, committing all sorts of war crimes and crimes against humanity without being checked. Israel is backed by a strong ally that uses its UN veto to bloc any resolutions that denounce Israel, and this ally opens its arsenal from which Israel can take whatever it wants to execute its policy of aggression. Toward what future is all this taking us?"

GRAPPO